

We call on President Clinton to rule that block grants and vouchers are nonnegotiable items in the end game negotiations that are now beginning to take place. Title I block grants are nonnegotiable. We refuse to accept a situation where block grants would return the power to the States using Federal money to decide how Title I will be spent.

It is the neglect, the savage neglect over the years of the States that have created conditions in our inner city communities and poverty rural communities that the Federal Government found necessary to address when the Elementary and Secondary Education System Act was established.

Why should we abandon the very schools and communities that the Elementary and Secondary Education System Act was meant to help? There is no honorable trade-off possible for block grants and vouchers. We hope that, in the negotiations, there will be a flat refusal to trade off with the Republicans on block grants and vouchers.

The bad news is that Republicans have turned their backs on education as the number one priority of the American people. But the good news is that Democrats have responded vigorously. All year long, we have made proposals.

Democrats have proposed two school construction initiatives. One that most people know about is the Rangel-Johnson initiative that proposes to pay the interest on money borrowed by States and local governments. Up to \$25 billion would be covered by a Federal allocation of about \$4 billion to cover the interest. The President has also proposed a direct appropriations initiative of \$1.3 billion.

Democrats support funding for smaller class sizes. Democrats support funding for more teachers in the classrooms, and therefore the ratio of students to teachers would be a more acceptable ratio and encourage greater teaching.

But one cannot have smaller class sizes if one does not have the classrooms. The construction initiative is vital to the implementation of the Democratic initiative to get smaller class sizes. Certainly in the poorest schools in the poorest communities, we do not have the classes for the smaller class sizes.

The 21st century learning centers proposed by the Democrats for after-school programs, for summer school programs, those programs also need room to operate in. One cannot operate effective summer schools unless one has buildings that are air conditioned in most parts of the country.

The community technology centers are an initiative of this Democratic administration. They want to expand that. We need space. We need buildings.

An increase in Head Start and preschool programs is another Democratic

initiative. We cannot increase Head Starts in the poorest communities where they are most needed. We cannot increase preschool programs in the poorest communities where they are most needed unless we have new facilities. We have to have better buildings and more buildings in order to accommodate these programs.

In our inner-city communities, school construction comes first. In Brooklyn, in my 11th Congressional District, we worked vigorously to get rid of coal burning schools, schools that have furnaces that burn coal. I am happy to report that the end is almost in sight, that the School Construction Authority in New York City has an agenda where by the end of the year 2001, there will be no more coal burning furnaces in our schools.

It is imperative that we act now to construct more schools. The Democratic initiative is necessary.

EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the public schools in our country. I know that should not be a major statement, but after hearing all of what people want to do with vouchers and everything else, maybe we need to have an affirmative affirmation that says, yes, we support our public schools in our country.

Some of the key priorities for our public schools are class size reduction, school modernization, and technology improvements of both our elementary and our secondary schools.

We need to fund the President's plans for school modernization and class size reduction, to ensure that our most valuable national resource, our children, will not continue to suffer from substandard school facilities and overcrowded classrooms.

Studies by the National Center for Education Statistics show that, on the average, public schools in America are 42 years old. School buildings begin rapid deterioration after 40 years. Additionally, 30 percent of our schools were built before 1970 and have never been renovated.

These schools are also lagging behind in our efforts to connect every classroom to the Internet. Only 42 percent of schools built before 1985 are connected to the Internet, compared to almost 60 percent of those built since.

According to GAO's estimate, it would cost \$112 billion to bring all our Nation's schools into good overall condition.

In my home State of Texas, where my wife teaches algebra, we have over 4 million students in almost 7,000 schools. Of those schools, 76 percent of

the Texas schools need repairs or upgrades just to reach the "good" condition; 46 percent need repairs to a building such as plumbing, electrical, heating or cooling systems; 60 percent have at least one environmental quality like air quality, ventilation, or lighting; and the student-to-computer ratio stands 11 to 1, 11 to 1 student-computer ratio. So one just has to wait one's turn for the use of that computer.

The cost for this alone in Texas is estimated to be \$10 billion to modernize school infrastructure and over \$4 billion to address the technology needs.

Aging schools, however, are not the only problem we have before us. We have to address the growing student population.

Again, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics, elementary and secondary school enrollment, already at a record-high 52.7 million, will climb to 54.3 million by 2008.

Again, in Texas, we see similar trends. Our education system has stretched past a breaking point when one adds in the expected growth in the number of students.

Over the next decade, the number of students in the elementary and secondary schools are expected to grow almost 8 percent in Texas alone, approximately 316,000 students. It is estimated almost 13,000 new classrooms will have to be built to handle this influx of new students.

Voters in my own hometown in Houston are trying to address this problem. In a recent Houston ISD bond election, they approved \$678 million to repair over 70 schools and to build 10 new ones. Fifty of the schools in HISD are over 50 years old. Twenty-five are over 70 years old. Much more is needed because they downsized it.

Also, voters in the Aldine school district where my wife teaches just approved a \$115.8 million bond package that would fund six new schools, a transportation center, and would provide upgrades for existing campuses.

Aldine Independent School District is already feeling the impact of increased enrollment with the number of students having grown over 1,200 each year for the last 7 years.

\$678 million and \$115 million sound like a lot of money, but it is really a drop in the bucket. School populations continue to increase, newer schools are beginning to show wear and tear; and facilities must be upgraded to keep our schools equipped with the cutting edge technology our children will need to be competitive in tomorrow's job market.

These numbers show that it is absolutely vital that Congress address the conditions of our Nation's schools now because the situation will obviously get worse.

Now, most of the school construction comes from, first, local money but also State money. But we need to make sure that we help what we can. Even if

it is only a few pennies on the dollar, Mr. Speaker, we can help. That is the reason I support the President's plan to reduce the class size and build more classrooms.

Additionally, I join my colleagues from around the country sponsoring legislation that will make tax credit bonds available to our schools, offer incentives for teachers who choose to teach at low-income or underserved areas and offer tax credits and student loan forgiveness for college students who choose to make teaching their profession.

I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting these important initiatives, and that we can work together and provide funding for our schools to educate our children. Our most important natural resource is the brains in our children that are being educated today.

GOVERNOR BUSH MISSES MARK ON COUNTRY PROSPERITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, we are engaged in a great fiscal debate in which the Governor of Texas tells us that, under his plan, every American who pays taxes will get tax relief. He is completely wrong. He should know that there are 15 million Americans who pay Federal taxes, who pay FICA taxes out of their wages that will not get a penny out of his tax plan, because he ignores the working poor. Those who care for people in nursing homes, those who clean our buildings and wash our cars are left behind. What is worse, of course, is that he provides almost half the benefits to the richest 1 percent of Americans.

Now, what concerns me most about the Governor's statements is that he mocks the importance of fiscal responsibility when he tells the country that the prosperity of the last 8 years has nothing to do with governmental decisions made in Washington.

He is correct that the lion's share of the credit for our national prosperity goes to American workers whose ingenuity, hard work and inventiveness is building a new economy. But for political gain, he denies that there is another essential element, and that is fiscal responsibility here in Washington.

By denying that what we do here in Washington has anything to do with how the economy performs, he grants to us a fiscal license, a statement that government has nothing to do with prosperity, hence government can do whatever it wants.

The fact is otherwise. The facts are that, during the mid-1980s and the late 1980s and the early 1990s, Americans were hard working and inventive and ingenious, and yet we did not have prosperity in this country.

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Why? Because we had a budget deficit that was growing every year and threatened to swallow up private savings in our economy. We cannot afford the license the political rhetoric from the Governor of Texas would grant.

Now, we are told by the Governor that he does not want to provide so much benefit to the upper 1 percent. He tells us that his plan will provide only \$223 billion of tax relief to that richest 1 percent over the next 10 years. He does this by ignoring the second largest piece of his proposal, and that is his repeal of the estate tax. He tries to minimize the fiscal effect of that by using fuzzy phase-in figures.

But the fact is the estate tax will be producing \$50 billion a year, \$500 billion over 10 years, which means the wealthiest 1 percent, over a 10-year period, will be getting \$700 billion of tax relief, not just the \$223 billion the Governor admits to. That is why when we look at the estate tax and the income tax the conclusion is clear: he provides more tax relief for the wealthiest 1 percent than everything he proposes to do to help our health care system, to strengthen Medicare, to strengthen the military and to provide for our schools combined.

It is time that we focus on the fiscal details of the plans of those who are running for President. This is not a popularity contest.

THE NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE TEACHING ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DICKEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, we are fortunate to live in an exciting and prosperous time. The Internet has bridged gaps between generations and nations. Biotechnology has produced medical miracles. Our cars have more computing power than the Apollo spacecraft. Success in this information age depends not just on how well we educate our children generally but how well we educate them in science and mathematics specifically.

Following the launch of Sputnik in 1957, major steps were taken in the United States to improve resources going into science. The goal was to pursue a superior technical workforce. This produced generations of scientists and engineers who have contributed greatly to our economic and technical accomplishments. I am a product of the Sputnik revolution. I have spent several decades in the world of teaching and physics research. But now, as a policymaker, I see the shortcomings of our earlier revolution in science and mathematics education, and I see the need to increase our effort for science and mathematics education today.

The push for improving public competence in science and mathematics is justified by economics, national security, and arguments about democracy. It is also important for personal fulfillment. Mathematics and science bring order and harmony and balance to our lives. They teach us that our world is intelligible and not capricious. They give us the skill for lifelong learning; really for creating progress itself. From the evidence we currently have at hand, it is clear we are not providing this quality education in math and science to our children.

I am proud to have been one of four Members of the House and Senate to serve on the National Commission on the Teaching of Mathematics and Science, chaired by former Senator and astronaut, John Glenn, and including leaders from industry, academia and professional and educational organizations. The Glenn Commission, as it has come to be known, was established to improve math and science education throughout the United States, and in its report, released 3 weeks ago, "Before It's Too Late," the commission identifies teaching as the most powerful instrument for reform; and thus teaching is the place to begin.

The commission calls for major changes throughout the teaching profession, the scientific professions, and the institutions that produce our teachers. Our country must devote attention to the quality, quantity and professional work environment of teachers in science and mathematics. In the next 10 years, we will have to recruit and hire 2.2 million teachers just to stay even with attrition in the teaching force. Most of these teachers, including all elementary schoolteachers, will be called on to teach science, and many will feel inadequate to teach it.

Along with my colleague, the gentleman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA), who also served on the commission, I am introducing legislation that seeks to make these changes. The National Improvement in Mathematics and Science Teaching Act, as it is called, establishes a new title in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to improve the quality of math and science education.

Specifically, this Glenn Commission bill establishes a State assistance grant program to recruit quality teachers into the field. Under this program, every State will receive funding that they can use for a variety of purposes that are designed to attract new and qualified math and science teachers. States can establish a loan forgiveness program, signing bonuses, or even create a career ladder for math and science teachers. The bill also establishes a similar grant program to improve professional development of these teachers. Like the previous grant program, States would have the flexibility to use these funds on a variety of